

Observations on medicaid patients use of ERs

90 % of ER visits by medicaid patients are not emergencies
The majority of medicaid patients use the ER because of the convenience.
The majority have not called their physician prior to coming to the ER.
The majority have not tried to make an appointment.
We see a number of patient who have: **more than 35 visits a year.**
We see a large number of patients who have **more than 25 visits a year**
We act as primary care physician to a great number of medicaid patients.

Average ER charge for care is **\$190** verses **\$50** for an office visit(estimates)

Problem

Inappropriate use of the emergency center for primary care.

Some of the reasons:

1. More convenient than going to a primary care provider
2. No financial incentive not to use ER.
3. Not having a primary care provider.

Recommendations:

- 1. Computer tracking of ER visits per patient per year.**
- 2. Identification of "over users" and use of case management.**
- 3.Co-payments by medicaid patients when using emergency centers (\$20 ?)**

To avoid problem of parents not bringing in sick children, there would be no co-payment, if the child had a condition warranting emergency evaluation. Also, for both children and adults the co-payment would not be necessary at the time of service, but could be subtracted from their next month's medicaid check. Patients with special needs would have to be treated differently.

Benefits

1. More appropriate use of emergency centers.
2. Education of patients.
3. Significant cost savings to the State and citizens
4. Resulting in more monies available for other groups, i.e. Basic Health, etc

Thank you,

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